

N^o 330. *Wednesday, March 19.*

Maxima debetur pueris reverentia — Juv.

THE following Letters, written by two very considerate Correspondents, both under twenty Years of Age, are very good Arguments of the Necessity of taking into Consideration the many Incidents which affect the Education of Youth.

S I R,

I HAVE long expected, that in the Course of your Observations upon the several Parts of Human Life, you would one time or other fall upon a Subject, which, since you have not, I take the liberty to recommend to you. What I mean, is the Patronage of young modest Men to such as are able to countenance and introduce them into the World. For want of such Assistances, a Youth of Merit languishes in Obscurity or Poverty, when his Circumstances are low, and runs into Riot and Excess when his Fortunes are plentiful. I cannot make myself better understood, than by sending you an History of myself, which I shall desire you to insert in your Paper, it being the only Way I have of expressing my Gratitude for the highest Obligations imaginable.

I am the Son of a Merchant of the City of London, who, by many Losses, was reduced from a very luxuriant Trade and Credit to very narrow Circumstances, in comparison to that of his former Abundance. This took away the Vigour of his Mind, and all manner of Attention to a Fortune which he now thought desperate; in so much that he died without a Will, having before buried my Mother in the midst of his other Misfortunes. I was sixteen Years of Age when I lost my Father; and an Estate of 200 l. a Year came into my Possession, without Friend or Guardian to instruct me in the Management

ment or Enjoyment of it. The natural Consequence of this was, (though I wanted no Director, and soon had Fellows who found me out for a smart young Gentleman, and led me into all the Debaucheries of which I was capable) that my Companions and I could not well be supplied without running in Debt, which I did very frankly, till I was arrested, and conveyed with a Guard strong enough for the most desperate Assassin, to a Bayliff's House, where I lay four Days, surrounded with very merry but not very agreeable Company. As soon as I had extricated my self from this shameful Confinement, I reflected upon it with so much Horror, that I deserted all my old Acquaintance, and took Chambers in an Inn of Court with a Resolution to study the Law with all possible Application. But I trifled away a whole Year in looking over a thousand Intricacies, without Friend to apply to in any Case of Doubt; so that I only lived there among Men, as little Children are sent to School before they are capable of Improvement, only to be out of harm's way. In the midst of this State of suspense, not knowing how to dispose of myself, I was sought for by a Relation of mine, who, upon observing a good Inclination in me, used me with great Familiarity, and carried me to his Seat in the Country. When I came there, he introduced me to all the good Company in the County; and the great Obligation I have to him for this kind Notice and Residence with him ever since, has made so strong an Impression upon me, that he has an Authority of a Father over me, founded upon the Love of a Brother. I have a good Study of Books, a good Stable of Horses always at my command; and tho' I am not now quite eighteen Years of Age, familiar converse on his part, and a strong Inclination to exert my self on mine, have had an effect upon me that makes me acceptable wherever I go. Thus, Mr. SPECTATOR, by this Gentleman's Favour and Patronage, it is my own fault if I am not wiser and richer every day I live. I speak this as well by subscribing the initial Letters of my Name to thank him, as to incite others to an Imitation of his Virtue. It would be a worthy Work to shew what great Charities are to be done without Expence, and how many noble Actions are lost, out of Inadvertency

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in Persons capable of performing them, if they were put in mind of it. If a Gentleman of Figure in a County would make his Family a Pattern of Sobriety, good Sense, and Breeding, and would kindly endeavour to influence the Education and growing Prospects of the younger Gentry about him, I am apt to believe it would save him a great deal of stale Beer on a publick Occasion, and render him the Leader of his Country from their Gratitude to him, instead of being a Slave to their Riots and Tumults in order to be made their Representative. The same thing might be recommended to all who have made any Progress in any Parts of Knowledge, or arrived at any Degree in a Profession; others may gain Preferments and Fortunes from their Patrons, but I have, I hope, receiv'd from mine good Habits and Virtues. I repeat to you, Sir, my Request to print this, in return for all the Evil an helpless Orphan shall ever escape, and all the Good he shall receive in this Life; both which are wholly owing to this Gentleman's Favour to,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

S. P.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

I AM a Lad of about fourteen. I find a mighty Pleasure in Learning. I have been at the *Latin* School four Years. I don't know I ever play'd truant, or neglected any Task my Master set me in my Life. I think on what I read in School as I go home at noon and night, and so intently, that I have often gone half a mile out of my way, not minding whither I went. Our Maid tells me, she often hears me talk *Latin* in my sleep. And I dream two or three Nights in the Week I am reading *Juvenal* and *Homer*. My Master seems as well pleased with my Performances as any Boy's in the same Class. I think, if I know my own Mind, I would choose rather to be a Scholar, than a Prince without Learning. I have a very good affectionate Father; but tho' very rich, yet so mighty near, that he thinks much of the Charges of my Education. He often tells me he believes my Schooling will ruin him; that I cost him God knows what in Books. I tremble to tell him I want one.

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I am forced to keep my Pocket-Money and lay it out for
 a Book, now and then, that he don't know of. He has
 order'd my Master to buy no more Books for me, but
 says he will buy them himself. I asked him for *Horace*
 t'other Day, and he told me in a Passion, he did not be-
 lieve I was fit for it, but only my Master had a mind to
 make him think I had got a great way in my Learning.
 I am sometimes a Month behind other Boys in getting
 the Books my Master gives Orders for. All the Boys in
 the School, but I, have the *Classick Authors in usum Del-*
phini, gilt and letter'd on the Back. My Father is often
 reckoning up how long I have been at School, and tells
 me he fears I do little good. My Father's Carriage so
 discourages me, that he makes me grow dull and me-
 lancholy. My Master wonders what is the matter with
 me; I am afraid to tell him; for he is a Man that loves
 to encourage Learning, and would be apt to chide my
 Father, and not knowing my Father's Temper, may
 make him worse. Sir, if you have any Love for Learn-
 ing, I beg you would give me some Instructions in this
 case, and persuade Parents to encourage their Children
 when they find them diligent and desirous of Learning.
 I have heard some Parents say, they would do any thing
 for their Children, if they would but mind their Learn-
 ing: I would be glad to be in their place. Dear Sir,
 pardon my Boldness. If you will but consider and
 pity my Case, I will pray for your Prosperity as long
 as I live.

London, March
 2, 1711.

Your humble Servant,

James Discipulus.

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